The Explanation of the
Fundamentals of Islamic Belief

By the Late Eminent Scholar,

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We would like to express our sincere appreciation to those who contributed to the publication of this book. May Allah reward them for their efforts. If you have any corrections, comments, or questions about this publication, please feel free to contact us at:

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Translator's Preface

Indeed, all praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, seek His Aid and His Forgiveness and we seek refuge in Allah from the evil of ourselves and from the evil of our actions. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can misguide; and whomsoever Allah leaves unguided, none can guide thereafter. I bear witness that there is no god (nothing has the right to be worshipped) except Allah, who is alone without partners, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared and die not except that you are Muslims. [Surah Aali-'Imraan (3):102]

O Mankind! Fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul (Adam) and from him created his partner (Eve) and from them both sent forth and scattered many men and women. So fear Allah through whom you demand your mutual rights and by the reverence of the wombs that bore you. For Allah is ever watchful over you. [Surah an-Nisaa' (4):l]

O you who believe! Fear Allah and say a truthful word. He will direct you to do righteous actions and will forgive your sins. Whosoever obeys Allah and His Mes-

senger has already attained the highest success. [Surah al-Ahzaab (33):70-71]

To proceed: Indeed the best speech is the Book of Allah and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, peace and blessing be upon him. The worst of affairs are the newly invented matters (in religion), for every invented matter is a bid'ah[1], every bid'ah is a misguidance, and every misguidance is in Hellfire.

This is a new translation of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Salih al-Uthaymeen's book about the fundamentals of Islam and Islamic creed and belief, may Allah have mercy on him. It is hoped that the information and learned perceptions of the Sheikh are communicated in a manner and form which capture and express the concepts and eloquent arguments of the Sheikh, who is known for making complicated matters easy and simple for us common Muslims, seeking to better understand and practice our religion of Islam.

My gratitude goes to all those who assisted in the preparation of this booklet, for their useful suggestions and corrections, and my special gratitude goes to Um Salman for continual encouragement and detailed scrutiny, criticism and review of the work. May Allah give all of them the great reward for all their good deeds, and for engaging in the work that pleases their Lord, Most Majestic and promoting the revitalization of His religion of Islam.

[1] Bid'ah: Something introduced into the religion, whether a tenet of belief or an act of worship, which has no precedent.

Any mistakes and lapses are my own for which I am solely responsible. I would be grateful for any constructive criticism to correct shortcomings and improve the work, by the Will and Aid of Allah Most Gracious.

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In the name of Allah, the Ever Compassionate, the Ever Merciful

Introduction

Indeed, all praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, seek His Aid and His Forgiveness and we seek refuge in Allah from the evil of ourselves and from the evil of our actions. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can misguide; and whomsoever Allah leaves unguided, none can guide thereafter. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, who is alone without partners, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. May God praise Muhammad, his family, his Companions and whoever follows them in goodness, and keep them safe from all evil.

To proceed:

The knowledge of Islamic monotheism is the most noble of all branches of knowledge. It also has the greatest worth. In addition, it is the most important of all obligations. It is all of these because it is knowledge of Allah, His names, His attributes and His rights upon His servants. Furthermore, it is the opening to the path that leads to Allah and the foundation of His Sacred Laws.

For these reasons, all of the messengers called to this knowledge and understanding. Thus, Allah says,

"And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad but We inspired him (saying): There is none worthy of worship but I (Allah), so worship Me (Alone and none else)." [Surah al-Anbiyaa (21):25]

Allah Himself bears witness to His own Oneness. The angels also bear witness to that as well as the people of knowledge. Allah says,

"Allah bears witness that none has right to worshiped but He, and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); established on justice. None has right to worshiped but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." [Surah Ali-Imraan 3:18]

Since this is the place and status of Islamic monotheism, it becomes a must upon every Muslim to attend to it by learning it, teaching it, pondering over it and believing in it. In this way, his religion may be built upon a sound foundation of conviction, confidence and submission and he may happily reap the fruits and results of this Islamic monotheism.

The Islamic Religion (*Deen*)

The Islamic religion is the religion with which Allah sent the Prophet Muhammad, sealing thereby the religions, perfecting it for His servants, completing upon them His bounty and chose it for them as a faith. No other faith or religion other than it will ever be accepted.

Allah has said,

> **"Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets. And Allah is Ever All-Aware of everything" (*al-Ahzaab* 33:40).**

Allah has also said,

> **"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (Surah al-Maaidah (5):3)**

The Exalted has also said,

> **"Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam." (Surah Aali-Imraan (3):19).**

Again, Allah says,

> **"And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers." (Surah Aali-Imraan (3):85)**

Allah has made it incumbent upon all of humankind that they that this as a religion and means of submission to Al-

lah. In speaking to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), Allah has said,

> **"Say [O Muhammad to the people:] O humankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah - to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. None has the right to be worshipped but He. It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write who believes in Allah and His Words, and follow him so that you may be guided." (Surah al-Araaf (7):158)**

In Sahih Muslim, it is recorded on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> **"By the one in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, no one, be he Jew or Christian, of the people of this nation hears of me and yet dies without believing in what I have been sent with except that he will be from the companions of the Hell-fire."**

Belief in him means to affirm, with proper acceptance and compliance and not merely an affirmation [in the mind], everything that he has come with. For this reason, Abu Taalib was not a believer in the Messenger (ﷺ) although he affirmed everything he brought and even testified that the Prophet's religion is the best of all religions.

The Islamic religion encompasses all of the goodness that was embodied in previous religions. However, it is distin-

guished by being suitable for all times, places and peoples. Allah says, while addressing His Messenger (ﷺ),

"And We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it and as a criterion over it (old Scriptures)." (Surah al-Maaidah (5):48)

The meaning that it is suitable for all times, places and peoples is that the one who adheres to it will never go against what is beneficial for the nation in any place or time. In fact, it is the thing that makes things right. It does not mean that it is meant to serve any place, time or people, as some people have tried to twist it to mean.

The Islamic religion is the religion of truth due to which, if one abides by it properly, Allah will give help and victory over all other religions. Allah has said,

"He it is Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to make it victorious over all (other) religions even though the polytheists hate (it)." (Surah as-Saff (61):9)

Allah also says,

"Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to [the present rulers] in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e., Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe secu-

rity after their fear [provided] they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything [in worship] with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the evildoers." (Surah an-Noor (24):55)

The Islamic religion is both a matter of creed as well as law. It is complete both in its beliefs and its laws.

It enjoins the oneness of Allah and prohibits associating partners with Allah.

It enjoins truthfulness and prohibits lying and falsehood.

It enjoins justice and prohibits injustice.

It enjoins fulfilling trusts and prohibits treachery.

It enjoins fulfilling promises and prohibits deception.

It enjoins being dutiful to one's parents and forbids being disobedient to them.

It enjoins being good to one's neighbors and prohibits harming them.

In general, one can say that Islam enjoins every noble and virtuous character, while prohibiting every evil, harmful trait. It enjoins every good, pious act and prohibits every evil deed. Indeed, Allah has said,

"Verily, Allah enjoins justice and goodness, and giving (help) to kith and kin; and forbids all evil deeds, bad conduct and wrongdoing. He admonishes you, that you may take heed." (Surah an-Nahl (16):90)

The Pillars of Islam

Islam is established on five pillars, as mentioned in the hadeeth narrated by (Abdullah) Ibn Umar (ﷺ), in which the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **Islam is built on five [pillars]: To single out Allah in worship (and in other narration: "The testimony that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the slave of Allah and His Messenger") and to establish the prayers, and to offer the Zakaah, and to fast Ramadan, and to perform the pilgrimage.**

A person said (to the narrator),

> **"Pilgrimage or the fast of Ramadan?"**

To this (the narrator) replied:

> **No (it is not the pilgrimage first) but the fast of Ramadan precedes the pilgrimage, this is how I have heard it from Allah's Messenger. (al-Bukhari and Muslim reported this hadeeth, and this wording is Muslim's)**

The five pillars in this hadeeth indicate the following:

1. **"The Shahaadah (testimony and witness) that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah"** is belief with firm resolve, expressed by the tongue that this testimony is true. The person testifying makes a firm commitment that the testimony is true, as if he or she is an eyewitness to the event testified about.

Even though more than one thing is being testified about[2] this testimony is considered only one pillar. This may be for one of two possible reasons. Either it is because the Messenger (ﷺ) is he who conveys the message of Allah (ﷻ), and thus the testimony that he is the slave and Messenger of Allah is a necessary completion and, in reality, part of the testimony of LA ILAAHA ILL-ALLAH, or it is because these two testimonies are necessary for the soundness and acceptance of deeds. No deed is good or acceptable unless it fulfills two conditions: that the act be done purely for Allah, (*Ikhlaas*), and that it be done in accordance to the way shown to us by the Messenger (ﷺ)[3]. By doing the act purely for Allah, the testimony of LA ILAAHA ILL-ALLAH is brought into reality and fulfilled, and by obeying the Messenger, the testimony 'Muhammad abdullaahi wa rasooluh' (Muhammad is the slave of Allah and His Messenger) is brought into reality and fulfilled.

There are many great benefits of the declaration of the testimony, one of which is the liberation of the heart, mind and soul of man from slavery and servitude to created things, and from following others besides the Messengers.

2. **"To establish Salaah"** (the obligatory prayers) means worshipping Allah in the complete and proper manner,

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[2] …namely the Oneness of Allah as well as the Prophethood of the Muhammad (ﷺ).

[3] *Mutaba'ah*, sometimes called *Ittibaa'*.

with full compliance to its prescribed times and postures. There are many benefits of the prayer, including tranquility, inner peace, happiness, and contentment, and the fact that it prevents one from evil acts and atrocities.

3. **"To offer the Zakaah"** (obligatory charity) means worshipping Allah by giving the determined amount of obligatory alms from one's wealth and possessions. The benefits of charity include purifying the heart from the ugly traits of greed and miserliness, besides the obvious benefit of providing for the needy Muslims and needs of the community at large.

4. **"To perform the Sawm (fast) of Ramadan"** means worshipping Allah by fasting during the days of the Islamic month of Ramadan from early dawn to after sunset by not eating or drinking (or engaging in legal sexual intercourse). The benefits of fasting include training oneself to hold back from prohibited and that which causes the displeasure of Allah the Most Almighty and Majestic.

5. **"To perform the Hajj"** (pilgrimage to Makkah) means worshipping Allah by traveling to Makkah to perform all the sacred rites of pilgrimage. The benefits of pilgrimage include training oneself to spend the utmost of one's wealth and physical exertion for Allah's pleasure. For this reason,

Hajj is a type of "Jihad" (striving and exerting oneself) in the way of Allah.

The benefits that we have mentioned here, and many others not mentioned, are the means to purify the Muslim nation and community and establish it upon the religion of truth, worshiping Allah (the Creator) sincerely, and acting with justice towards all His creatures. If these basic foundations of Islamic Law are correct, then whatever other actions are built upon them will also be correct. The Islamic nation and community will only prosper and be successful by fulfilling its religious obligations. Falling short in fulfilling this obligation will proportionally deprive them of success and prosperity.

To see a clear evidence of this principle, read the following verse from the Book of Allah:

> **And if the people of the town had believed and had piety and fear of Allah, We would have opened for them the blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they rejected (the truth and the Messengers). So we took them for what they used to do. Do people of the towns feel secure against that coming of our Punishment by night, while they are asleep? Or do the people of the towns feel secure against the coming of our Punishment in the afternoon, while they play? Do they feel secure against the plan of Allah? None feels secure from the plan of Allah except the people who are lost and doomed. [Surah al-A'raaf (7):96-99]**

Examine the histories of the peoples of the world and you will see lessons for those that take heed and are unbiased. We indeed seek Allah's aid.

The Fundamentals of Islamic Creed

Pillars of *Īman* (Creed and Belief)

The religion of Islam, as explained above, is comprised of *Aqeedah* (creed, faith and belief) and *Sharee'ah* (revealed laws). We have mentioned some pillars of the *Sharee'ah* above. The pillars and fundamentals of *Aqeedah* are to believe in:

1) Allah,
2) His Angels,
3) His Books,
4) His Messengers,
5) the Last Day, and
6) Qadar (Divine Will), both its good and evil consequences.

These pillars and fundamentals are mentioned in the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* [4] (the narrations of the Prophet ﷺ) of His Messenger (ﷺ).

An example from the Book of Allah is the saying of Allah:

> **Righteousness is not that you turn your faces towards the East or the West (in prayers), but righteousness is**

[4] Sunnah: the speech, deeds, tacit approvals, and characteristics of the Prophet (ﷺ).

the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):177].

And from the Book of Allah, with regards to Qadar, the saying of Allah:

Verily, We have created all things by Qadar. And Our Commandment is but one, as the twinkling of an eye. [Surah al-Qamar (54):49]

And from the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ), when asked about *Īman* by the angel Jibreel, he replied:

"*Īman* is to believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in Qadar, and what it brings of good or bad." (Reported by Muslim)

Belief in Allah

Belief in Allah comprises four aspects:

<u>The First Aspect:</u> The belief in Allah's existence. This is established by:

1. ***Al-Fitrah*** (the natural pure inclination towards the truth)
2. ***Al-Aql*** (reason and analysis),
3. ***Ash-Sharee'ah*** (revelation and scripture),
4. ***Al-Hiss*** (physical senses).

1. The proof of *al-Fitrah* concerning Allah's existence is that every created being innately believes in his or her Creator without any preceding instruction, dogma, or thought. No one deviates from this natural and innate belief except due to external corrupt influences which make his or her heart swerve and depart from belief, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **Each child is born in a state of *Fitrah* but his parents make him into a Jew or Christian or Magian (Zoroastrian). (Reported by al-Bukhari)**

2. The proof of *al-Aql* (reason and analysis) concerning Allah's existence is that the things that we find in past and present existence must have had a Creator and Originator, since they could not have created themselves, and they could not have come into existence by mere chance, acci-

dent or coincidence. The reason they could not have created themselves is that, before their existence, they were nothing; so how can nothing create itself, i.e. something essentially deficient and impotent? They couldn't have been created by mere chance, accident or coincidence, because every new event must have its prior causes that made it occur. We also see this creation with its amazing and magnificent organization, harmony and cohesion, and with the interrelations between the causes and effects. All this makes it completely unbelievable that it came into being by mere chance, accident or coincidence. How can something that came into existence by mere accident or coincidence become organized and coherent in the process of further development?

If all this creation could not have created itself nor been created by chance, then it must have a Creator and Originator: this is Allah the Lord and Sustainer of the Universe. Allah, the Most Exalted, has mentioned this proof by reason and analysis in the Qur'an in Surah at-Toor, The Mountain, when He said:

> **Were they (humans) created by nothing, or were they creators themselves? [Surah at-Toor (52):35]**

This verse indicates that, since men were not created without a Creator, nor did they create themselves, it must be that they have a Creator who is Allah the most Blessed and Exalted. For this reason, when Jubair ibn Mut'im (ﷺ) heard the Messenger (ﷺ) recite this Surah (at-Toor) from the Qur'an, when he reached the passage:

Were they created by nothing, or were they creators themselves? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no firm belief. Or are the Treasures of your Lord with them? Or are they the tyrants with authority to do as they like? [Surah at-Toor (52):35-37]

…he said, while still a polytheist at that time:

My heart almost flew out of me (from the common sense of the verse).

And in another version of the narration he said:

This was the first time that *Īman* entered my heart. (Reported by al-Bukhari)

A practical example clarifies this line of argument. If someone tells you about a huge palace surrounded by beautiful gardens with rivers flowing in them, furnished completely with all the basic necessities and with the best beds and cushions and decorated with all kinds of luxuries. Then after all this, he says to you, "This palace with all its beauty has come into existence by itself, or it came into existence by mere chance and coincidence without any builder or contractor," immediately you would reject his statement as preposterous nonsense and you would consider his line of argument as most ridiculous. Therefore, can anyone with reason say that it is possible that this universe, with all its awe inspiring expanses of galaxies and amazing order, could have brought itself into existence or that it could have come into existence without an Originator or Creator?

3. The proof of *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture) concerning Allah's existence is that all of the divinely revealed Scriptures confirm His existence. The laws and instructions that Allah revealed in these scriptures, which address the needs and affairs of His creation, are evidence that they came from an Omniscient and Sublime Sovereign Lord, who knows everything that is best for His creatures. The fact that our observations agree to the information about natural laws contained within them is an evidence that they are from a Lord Sovereign Supreme who is able to bring into being what he informed.

4. The proofs of *al-Hiss* (physical sense) concerning Allah's existence are from two directions. The first is that we witness and see that Allah answers those who supplicate to Him and call out to Him in distress. This proves decisively that Allah exists. Allah said:

> **And (remember) Nooh, when he cried (to us) aforetime; We listened to his supplication. [Surah al-Anbiyaa' (21):76]**

And Allah said:

> **(Remember) when you sought help from your Lord, and He answered you. [Surah al-Anfaal (8):9]**

In an authentic hadeeth reported by al-Bukhari, it is reported that Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, said:

While the Prophet (ﷺ) was delivering the sermon on a Friday, a Bedouin stood up and said, "O, Allah's Messenger! Our possessions are being destroyed and the children are hungry; please supplicate to Allah (for rain)." So the Prophet (ﷺ) raised his hands (and supplicated to Allah for rain). At that time there was no trace of any cloud in the sky. But by Him in Whose Hands is my soul, clouds gathered like mountains, and before he got down from the pulpit, I saw the rain falling on his (the Prophet's) beard. (It rained all week long.) That Bedouin, or another man, stood up on the next Friday (during the sermon) and said, "O Allah's Messenger! Houses have collapsed and our possessions and livestock have drowned; please supplicate to Allah for us (to stop the rain). So the Prophet (ﷺ) raised his both hands and said, "O Allah! Around us, and not on us." So in whatever direction he pointed his hands the clouds dissipated and cleared away.

We continue to see the evidence of people's prayers and supplications being answered - for those who are truly sincere and truthful in their prayers and fulfill the conditions for acceptance.

The second proof concerning sense perception is that the prophets of Allah brought various miracles that many people either witnessed directly or heard about (from reliable sources). These miracles constitute positive and irrefutable proofs about the existence of the one who sent them - Allah the Most Exalted - since they are actions (and miracles) outside the ability of humans, that Allah commands to happen

through His prophets, to help them and, at the same time, give them success in their mission

An example of one of these miracles is the sign that Allah gave to Musaa (ﷺ). Allah ordered him to strike the sea with his stick and the sea parted into twelve dry sections with a mass of water like a mountain on the side of each section. Allah the Most Exalted says in the Qur'an:

> **Then We inspired Musaa (saying): "Strike the sea with your stick." And it parted, and each separated part (of the sea water) became like a huge, firm mass of a mountain. [Surah al-Anbiyaa' (26):63]**

A second example is from the miracles of 'Eesaa (ﷺ) who was given the power by Allah to resurrect the dead in their graves back to life. Allah the Most Exalted informs us in the Qur'an that he ('Eesaa) said:

> **…and I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave. [Surah Aali 'Imraan (3):49]**

And also the verse:

> **And when you (O 'Eesaa) brought forth the dead by My Permission. [Surah al-Maa'idah (5):110]**

A third example is from the miracles of Muhammad (ﷺ). The tribe of Quraish asked him to show them a miracle as a proof of his prophethood, so the Prophet (ﷺ) pointed to the moon and it split into two pieces, which people saw in amazement. Allah the Most Exalted said about this incident:

The Hour has drawn near, and the moon has been cleft, and they see a sign, yet they turn away and say: "This is but continuous sorcery." [Surah al-Qamar (54):1-2]

<u>The Second Aspect:</u> is the belief in Allah's "*Rububiyyah*" (Lordship), that He is the "*Rubb*" without partner, peer or helper. The "*Rubb*" is the one who creates, owns and commands the universe. There is no Creator and Sustainer except Him. There is no supreme King and Sovereign except Him. There is no ultimate Commander and Legislator except Him. Allah the Most Exalted said:

Surely to Him is the Creation and Commandment. [Surah al-A'raaf (7):54]

And Allah said,

Such is Allah your Lord; His is the Kingdom. And those whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, do not own even the little membrane stretched over the date-stone. [Surah al-Faatir (35):13].

In history we find that only a very few people have disbelieved in Allah's Lordship The ones who denied openly what they really believed deep in their hearts were the arrogant and insolent people, such as, by way of an example, the Pharaoh, when he said to his people, as mentioned in the Qur'an:

I am your lord, most high. [Surah an-Naazi'aat (79):24]

And when he said:

O chiefs! I do not know that you have a god other than me! [Surah al-Qasas (28):38]

We know that what he said was not his true belief, because Allah said,

And they denied them wrongfully and arrogantly, even though they were convinced (of the truth) in their own selves. [Surah an-Naml (27):14].

Musaa (ﷺ) said to Pharaoh, as related by Allah:

Verily you know that these Signs have been sent down by none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth as clear (evidences). And I think you are, indeed, O Pharaoh, doomed to destruction. [Surah al-Israa (17):102].

The Arab disbelievers and polytheists used to confirm Allah's Lordship even though they associated others with Him in worship. Allah the Most Exalted said:

Say: "Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein? If you know!" They will say: "It is Allah's!" Say: "Will you not then remember?" Say: "Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Great Throne?" They will say: "Allah!" Say: "Will you not then fear Allah?" Say: "In Whose Hands is the sovereignty of everything? And He protects everything while against Him there is no protector, if you know?" They will say: "(All this belongs) to Allah." Say: "How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth)?" [Surah al-Mu'minoon (23):84-89]

And also Allah said:

> **If you ask them: "Who has created the heavens and the earth?" They will surely say: "The All-Mighty, the All-Knower created them." [Surah az-Zukhruf (43):9]**

In another verse Allah says:

> **And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: "Allah." How then are they turned away (from His worship)? [Surah az-Zukhruf (43):87].**

The command of Allah encompasses two kinds of commands: those related to universal natural affairs of the created universe, and those related to legal affairs of religious law and revealed scriptures. He commands and decrees as He wills in accordance to His Omniscient Wisdom. He is the Ruler who gives the Commandment to legislate and establish the laws pertaining to all aspects of worship and human dealings according to His Wisdom. Anybody who believes that someone else besides Allah has the right to legislate and establish laws pertaining to the aspects of worship, and to be the Ruler and Judge of human dealings, commits "Shirk"[5] with Allah, and he has not realized "*Īman*" (faith).

The Third Aspect: The belief in Allah's "*Uluhiyyah*", meaning that He alone is God, He alone has "Divinity" and "Godhead," making only Him worthy of worship.

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[5] Polytheism, idolatry disbelief, associating others with Allah in worship and belief.

The meaning of the word "*ilaah*"[6] means that which is worshipped [in truth or falsehood, rightly or wrongly] with ultimate love and supreme glorification Allah the Most Exalted said:

And your *ilaah* is the one *ilaah*, there is no true God worthy of worship but He, the Most Beneficent (whose Mercy encompasses everything), the Most Merciful. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):163]

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

Allah bears witness that none has right to be worshipped but He, and the angels and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (this fact is) established on justice. None has the right to be worshipped but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [Surah Aali 'Imraan (3):18]

All other gods besides Allah are false gods, and giving to anyone besides Allah the trait of "divinity", "Godhead" and worthiness to be worshipped is false and void. Allah the Most Exalted said:

That is because Allah is the Truth (the Only True and Real God), and what they (the disbelievers) invoke besides Him is falsehood. And verily, Allah is the Most High, the Most Great. [Surah al-Hajj (22):62].

[6] Sometimes translated as *g*od with a lowercase '*g*', or deity.

Calling them gods does not entitle them to the right of "*Uluhiyyah*." Allah said the following in description about the pagan Arab deities "*al-Laat*", "*al-'Uzzaa*", and "*Manaat*":

> **They are but names which you have named, you and your fathers, for which Allah has sent down no authority. [Surah an-Najm (53):23]**

Allah related what Joseph said to his two companions in jail (about these false deities):

> **O my two companions! Are many different lords better or Allah the One, the Irresistible? You worship besides Him not except [mere] names you have named them, you and your fathers, for which Allah has sent down no authority. [Surah Yusuf (12):39-40]**

For this reason the Messengers, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them, would say to their respective communities:

> **Worship Allah! You have no other God but Him. [Surah al-Mu'minoon (23):23]**

But the idolaters and polytheists refused to obey this message, and took false gods as their objects of worship, seeking refuge, aid and victory from them. But Allah has proven that their worship is false, invalid and void by two wise lines of argument:

The first line of argument: These idols and false gods that the disbelievers take for worship do not have any attributes that qualify them to be gods: they are created matter and do not create; they cannot bring any benefit for those who wor-

ship them nor can they fend off any harm; they cannot give life or death; they do not own anything in the kingdom of the heavens and earth nor do they have the least partnership in its dominion. In this context, Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **They have taken besides Him other gods that created nothing but are themselves created, who posses neither hurt nor benefit to themselves, nor possess any power (of causing) death nor (of giving) life, nor of raising the dead. [Surah al-Furqaan (25):3]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Say (O Muhammad): "Call upon those whom you claim (to be gods) besides Allah: they do not possess even the weight of small ant, neither in heavens nor on the earth, they do not share in anything; Allah has not taken any one from among them as a supporter; and intercession with Him (Allah) is of no avail except for whom He permits." [Surah Saba' (34):22-23]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Do they attribute as partners to Allah those who created nothing but they themselves are created? Neither they can help them, nor can they help themselves. [Surah al-A'raaf (7):191-192]**

Since these are the traits of these feeble false "gods," to take them as objects of worship is the most foolish act and is most demeaning to the dignity of man.

The second line of argument is as follows: These polytheists would acknowledge that Allah Alone is the "*Rubb*," the Creator in Whose Hand is the Sovereignty of everything, Who protects everything and against Whom there is no protector. This acknowledgement necessitates that they should also acknowledge that Allah is the only God, worthy of worship with true *Uluhiyyah*.

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **O Mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become among the pious. He has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down rain from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. So do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know (that He Alone has the right to be worshipped). [Surah al-Baqarah (2):21-22]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: "Allah." Then how do they fabricate lies (about Him)? [Surah az-Zukhruf (43):87]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Say (O Muhammad): "Who provides for you from the sky and from the earth? Or who owns (your) hearing and sight? And who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And who disposes of the affairs?" They will say: "Allah."**

Say: "Will you not then be afraid of Allah's punishment?" Such is Allah, your Lord in truth. So after the Truth, what else can there be save falsehood and error? How then are you turned away? [Surah Yunus (10):31-32]

The Fourth Aspect: The belief in Allah's "*Asmaa was Sifaat*" (Names and Attributes). This is to affirm the names and attributes that Allah affirmed and described about Himself in His Book and in the Sunnah of His Messenger, in accordance to what best befits His Majesty and Exaltedness, without *Tahreef*[7], *Ta'teel*[8], *Takyeef*[9] or *Tamtheel*[10].

[7] Linguistically, ***tahreef*** means to change. In religious terminology, it means to change a text, either its wording or its meaning. Changing the meaning of a text is usually done by attributing a rare definition to a word without any evidence, such as claiming that the two hands which are attributed to Allah in the Qur'an mean "power" or "bounty", etc.

[8] Linguistically, ***ta'teel*** means to empty or void. In religious terminology here, it means to reject what is obligatory to affirm in regards to the Names and Attributes of Allah, or to reject some of it. This is of two kinds:

a) Total *ta'teel*: This is like the *ta'teel* of the *Jahmiyyah* who reject the Attributes of Allah. The extremists of the Jahmiyyah reject the Names of Allah also.

b) Partial *ta'teel*: Such as the *ta'teel* of the *'Ash'ariyyah* and the *Maatureediyyah* who reject some of the Attributes of Allah and believe in others

[9] ***Takyeef*** means to describe something, such as to describe how the Hand of Allah is, or how Allah descends to the lowest heaven.

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, therefore call Him by them, and leave the company of those who deny, falsify (or say blasphemies against) His Names. They will be rewarded for what they used to do. [Surah al-A'raaf (7):180]**

And He said:

> **His is the highest description in the heavens and in the earth. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [Surah ar-Room (30):27]**

And He said:

> **There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All Seer. [Surah ash-Shooraa (42):11].**

Two groups of people have gone astray regarding this matter:

The first group is the *"al-Mu'attilah"*, who negated all or some of Allah's names and attributes claiming that affirming them necessitated *"Tashbeeh"* (see previous footnote). This claim is false in many respects including the fact that, firstly, it necessitates ascribing contradictions to the words

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[10] ***Tamtheel*** means to ascribe equals to something. It can also mean ascribing similarity to something (which is more specifically called *tashbeeh*) either by giving a created being an attribute specific to Allah, such as creation, or the right to worship, or by drawing similarities to Allah with the creation, such as by saying that Allah's Hand is similar to our hand, etc.

of Allah - may He be glorified, exalted and purified from any imperfection. Allah Himself has affirmed these names and attributes to Himself, and He also negated any likeness between Himself and anything in the universe. Thus, this affirmation cannot contain any *"Tashbeeh"* since this would imply that there are contradictions in the speech of Allah, and that some parts belie the others.

It is also false because it is not necessary that the nominal agreement between two things obligate complete likeness and similarity between them. You see that two humans have the traits of hearing, sight and speech, but in no way does this necessitate an exact similarity in these characteristics of humanity: hearing, sight and speech. Similarly you see that animals have hands, legs and eyes, but the nominal agreement of having a hand, leg, and eye, does not necessitate that their hands, legs and eyes are like each other. If this distinction in the nominal agreement in names and attributes is clearly recognized among the created things, then the distinction between the Creator and the created things is even greater and more evident.

The second group is called the *"Mushabbihah"* who affirm Allah's names and attributes but make *"Tashbeeh"* (anthropomorphism) between Allah and His creation, claiming that this is the meaning of the texts since Allah only speaks to mankind according to their limited understanding. This is a ridiculously false claim for many reasons, including the following:

First: Allah cannot be like His creation because this is negated by the revealed scriptures as well as sound reasoning, and it is impossible that the Qur'anic text and Sunnah would propagate falsehood.

Second: Allah addressed mankind according to their understanding of the basic lingual meanings of His names and attributes, but this does not mean that the knowledge of the real essence and ultimate true nature of these meanings can be fathomed and comprehended by man regarding His "*Dhaat*" (essence) and "*Sifaat*" (attributes). This knowledge is something that exclusively belongs to Allah Alone. If Allah affirms that He is All-Hearer, we know the quality of hearing from the lingual understanding of the basic meaning - that is, hearing is the sensual comprehension of sounds and voices. However, the essence of this meaning with respect to the Hearing of Allah cannot be fathomed and remains unknown to us, because the essence of hearing varies among the created beings and animals, so certainly the difference between the hearing of the created and the hearing of the Creator is more and greater.

Allah confirmed that He did *"istawaa"* on His throne. The general meaning of the word *istiwaa* is known[11], but nevertheless the real meaning and ultimate true nature of Allah's *istawaa* on His Majestic Throne is unknown. *Istiwaa* varies with regards to different actions and creatures. To settle in a chair is different than mounting a wild camel. If *istawaa* has

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[11] This word means to mount, settle over, or rise over an object.

various meanings among us creatures, then how can the *istawaa* of Allah be compared to the *istawaa* of His creation? Indeed any reasonable person can understand that there is a huge difference between the two forms of *istawaa*.[12]

Believing in Allah in the way we have described above leads to many benefits for the believers: first, the full realization of *Tawheed* (Islamic monotheism) by not depending upon, fearing, hoping for, or worshipping anyone else besides Allah; second, the fulfillment of complete love, reverence and glorification of Allah according to the meanings of these beautiful names and exalted attributes; and third worshipping Allah as He has prescribed with avoidance of what He has commanded to be avoided.

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[12] An extreme form of *tashbeeh* is the notion of *Wahdat-ul-Wujood*, or the notion that Allah in present within everything existent. This notion came was introduced into the religion of Islam when the religion spread far and wide, and people entered into its fold without leaving the false concepts of their previous religion. Without going into much detail, this belief contradicts many proofs in the Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as proofs of the intellect, and is regarded as disbelief which takes one out of the fold of Islam. A similar belief is that Allah is present everywhere. Certain groups have misconstrued various verses in the Qur'an to promote this concept. In reality, it is Allah's sight, hearing, etc., which encompasses all, but, physically, Allah is over His Throne above the seventh heaven, as Allah Himself mentioned in numerous places in the Qur'an.

Belief in the Angels

Angels are creatures that are unseen by us who worship Allah. They do not have any of the traits of divinity or lordship. Allah created them from pure light and gave them the inflexible and innate inclination to always obey Him. They have great powers to execute whatever they are commanded.

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And those who are near Him (i.e. the angels) are not too proud to worship Him, nor do they grow weary (of His worship). They glorify His praises night and day, (and) they never slacken (to do so). [Surah al-Anbiyaa' (21):19-20]**

They are so numerous that only Allah can count their numbers. This is confirmed from the hadeeth narrated by Anas ibn Malik (ﷺ), as reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim, of the Prophet's (ﷺ) ascension to the highest heaven, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, wherein he saw *al-Bait al-Ma'moor* [13] (the House that is always inhabited). In

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[13] *Al-Bait al-Ma'moor*, which is in the Seventh Heaven, is the *Qiblah* of the Angels. It has been mentioned in the Hadeeth of al-Mi'raaj that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **I was then shown *al-Bait al-Ma'moor*, seventy thousand enter it every day, never to return to it.** (This hadeeth is reported by Buk-

this House each and every day seventy thousand angels pray and after leaving the House, they never return to it.

Faith and belief in the angels comprises four factors:

1. To believe in their existence.

2. To believe in those whose names are known to us, like Jibreel, as well as those whose names we do not know.

3. To believe in all that we know about their traits and attributes, like the fact that the angel Jibreel, whom the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) saw in his original form in which he was created, has six hundred wings and is so immense that he covered the entire horizon.

The angels can change their shapes and transform themselves by the order and will of Allah. They may take the shape of men, like when Allah sent the Jibreel to Maryam (Mary, mother of 'Eesaa (عليه السلام)) or when He sent Jibreel to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in the shape of a man wearing very white clothes with very dark hair while he was with his companions, and whom none of the companions knew and who had no evidence apparent on him that he was a traveler. He sat in front of the Prophet (ﷺ) such that his

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hari, Muslim and others, and is commonly known as the hadeeth of Jibreel)

The meaning of 'enter it' is that they worship Allah therein and circumambulate around it, as the Muslims circumambulate around the *Ka'bah*.

knees touched the knees of the Prophet (ﷺ) and put his hands on his thighs. He then asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about Islam, *Īman* (faith and belief), *Ihsaan* (excellence in the religion) and the Last Hour and its signs. The Prophet answered all his questions, and when Jibreel left, the Prophet (ﷺ), said to his companions,

> **This was Jibreel, who came to teach you your religion.** (Recorded by Muslim)

Similarly, the angels that Allah sent to Abraham and Lot were also in the form of humans.

4. To believe in what we know about the deeds and tasks they perform in obedience to the commandments of Allah, like the fact that they worship, glorify and praise Allah day and night without becoming bored, slacken or tire.

Some angels are commissioned with specialized tasks.

Jibreel (Gabriel): he is the angel commissioned and entrusted to convey Allah's revelations to the prophets and messengers.

Mikaa'eel (Michael): he is the angel commissioned and entrusted to distribute sustenance like the rainfall and vegetation.

Israfeel: he is the angel commissioned and entrusted to blow the Trumpet on the Appointed Hour of the Day of Resurrection.

Malak-ul-Mawt (The angel of Death): he is the angel commissioned to take the souls from the bodies at the time of death.

Maalik: he is commissioned to guard the hellfire.

Then there are angels that are commissioned to the embryos while in the wombs of their mothers: Allah sends these angels after the embryos complete four months in the womb and orders them to write the decree of the person's provision, life term, deeds, and whether he will be of the wretched or the blessed.

Also there are angels commissioned to guard people and record all the deeds of the children of Adam: there is an angel on the right [writing good deeds] and another of the left [writing the evil ones].

Some angels are commissioned to examine the dead with specific questions once they are buried: two angels[14] come and ask the dead person in his grave about his Lord, his Religion, and his Prophet.

The great benefits of believing in the angels include the following:

1. Recognition of Allah's Greatness, Magnificent Power and Authority, because the Greatness of Allah's creation is only due to the Greatness of Allah, the Creator.

[14] Their names are Munkar and Nakeer.

2. Giving praise and thanks to Allah for His care and concern to mankind, since He has appointed the angels to protect them, record their deeds and do other beneficial acts for them.

3. Love of the angels for the fact that they are sincere worshippers to Allah.

Some deviant people have denied that the angels have physical forms and bodies, claiming that they represent, instead, the inherent power of the unseen good in creation. This position is a direct denial of the Book of Allah most Exalted, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the consensus (*ijma'*) of Muslims.[15]

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **All praise is due for Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels, messengers with wings, two, three and four. [Surah Faatir (35):1]**

And He said:

> **And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve: they smite their faces and their backs. [Surah al-Anfaal (8):50]**

And He said:

> **And if you could but see when the unjust (people) are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching**

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[15] This belief is unacceptable and is regarded as *kufr*, or disbelief.

> **forth their hands (saying): "Deliver your souls." [Surah al-An'aam (6):93]**

And He said:

> **Until when fear is banished from their hearts, they (the angels) say: "What is that which your Lord has said?" They say: "The Truth. And He is the Most High, the Most Great." [Surah Saba' (34):23]**

And He said about the people of Paradise:

> **And angels shall enter unto them from every gate (saying): "Peace be upon you for your persevered patience! Excellent indeed is the final Home." [Surah ar-Ra'd (13):23-24]**

Al-Bukhari reports that Abu Hurairah (ﷺ) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> **When Allah likes a slave, He calls on Jibreel saying: "Allah loves such and such (a person) therefore love him." Then Jibreel loves him. So then Jibreel calls on the inhabitants of heaven, saying: "Allah loves so and so, therefore love him." So the people of heaven love him. Then the acceptance will be granted for him on the earth.**

Al-Bukhari also recorded from him that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> **When the day of Friday comes, angels stand at each of the doors of the masjid to record the first, and then the next (person that comes to the masjid). When the Imam**

sits (on the pulpit) they close the scrolls and come to listen to the words of reminder.

The above texts clearly demonstrate that the angels have physical forms, and are not just spiritual forces, as the misguided claim. The entire community of Muslims understands that these texts (and their like) mean that the angels exist in a real physical form and body.

Belief in the Scriptures

The Arabic word “*Kutub*” means books and scriptures, and is the plural for “*Kitab* (a book, scroll and scripture). They are called *Kutub* because they are written (*Maktoob*); scriptures. In this context, *kutub* means those Books that Allah sent down and revealed to His Messengers as a mercy and guidance for mankind to lead them to true happiness in this life and in the Hereafter.

Faith and belief in the Scriptures comprises four aspects:

1. To believe that Allah sends them down as revelation.

2. To believe in all the Scriptures about which we have specific information: such as the Qur’an sent down and revealed to Muhammad (ﷺ); the Torah sent down and revealed to Musaa (عليه السلام); the *Injeel* (the Gospel) sent down and revealed to ‘Eesaa (ﷺ); and the *Zaboor* (the Psalms) sent down and revealed to Dawood (عليه السلام). We also believe generally in all other Scriptures sent down and revealed by Allah, even though we do not know their particular names.

3. To attest and confirm as truth all the information that these Scriptures contain, such as the information of the Qur’an and that information which has been left unchanged by corruptions in the previous scriptures [which may only be known by its agreement to the Qur’an].

4. To execute all the orders and implement all the commandments contained in these Scriptures and Books unless Allah commanded to the contrary through "*Naskh*" (abrogation, over-ruling). We accept whatever rules and instructions they contain, even if we do not know (and fathom) the wisdom behind them. The Qur'an abrogates all the previous Scriptures. Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'an) in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it, and *muhaimin* (dominant, and a trustworthy witness) over it. [Surah al-Maa'idah (5):48]**

This means that the Qur'an is the Supreme Authority and adjudicator, dominant over all other Scriptures and Books. As such, no law, commandment or instruction contained in those Books is to be implemented unless it is proven to be sound and uncorrupted and confirmed by the Qur'anic texts.

The great benefits of believing in the Scriptures and Books include:

1. Knowledge that Allah has intimate concern for His slaves such that He sent down for each nation and community scriptures to guide them to success.

2. Knowledge that Allah, by His wisdom, commanded each nation with what is suitable for them, as He the most exalted said:

To each among you We have prescribed a Law and a Clear Way. [Surah al-Maa'idah (5):48].

3. Thankfulness to Allah's bounties for sending down and revealing these Scriptures and Books to lead mankind to guidance.

Belief in the Messengers and Prophets

The Arabic word "*Rusul*" is the plural of "*Rasool*" which means a messenger sent to convey a message. In religious Islamic terminology, a *Rasool* is the man who receives a divine code of law and is commanded by Allah to proclaim and convey it to the people.

The first of the Messengers was Nooh (Noah) and the last one was Muhammad, may Allah praise them and keep them all safe from all evil.

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Verily, We have inspired you (O Muhammad) as We inspired Nooh and the Prophets after him. [Surah an-Nisaa' (4):163].**

Imam al-Bukhari reports the narration about *Shafa'ah* (intercession) on the authority of Anas ibn Malik (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **Mankind will come to Adam to intercede on their behalf but he will decline saying: "Go to Nooh, the First Messenger that Allah sent..."**

And Allah the Most Exalted said about Muhammad(ﷺ):

> **Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but the Messenger of Allah, and the Last of the Prophets. [Surah al-Ahzaab (33):40]**

There has not been any nation except that Allah sent a Messenger with an independent law for them to rule by, or a prophet (*nabi*) to revive the message of a previous Messenger (*Rasool*). Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And verily We have sent among every community a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah and avoid *Taghoot* (Satan, idols, tyrants)." [Surah an-Nahl (16):36]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And there never was a nation but a Warner had passed among them. [Surah Faatir (35):24]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Verily, We did send down the Torah (to Musaa), therein was guidance and light, by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah's Will, judged the Jews… [Surah al-Maa'idah (5):44]**

The Messengers are merely humans and they do not possess any attributes of divinity or lordship.

Allah mentioned that His Prophet Muhammad is the most noble of the Messengers and the highest among them in honor and rank before Allah:

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Say (O Muhammad), "I do not possess power to benefit or hurt myself except as Allah Wills. If I had knowledge of the Unseen I would have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and evil would never have**

touched me. I am only a Warner and bringer of glad tidings to those who believe." [Surah al-A'raaf (7):188]

The Messengers are fully human with all the human traits, weaknesses and needs: they succumb to illness and death, and have the natural necessity for food, drink etc., like all other humans. The Prophet Ibraheem describes Allah, His Lord, with the following words:

And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink, and when I am ill, it is He Who cures me; And it is He Who will cause me to die and then He will bring me to life again. [Surah ash-Shu'araa' (26): 79-81]

And in an authentic hadeeth reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others the Prophet said,

I am only human just like you, I forget as you forget. Therefore when I forget, remind me.

The highest rank and most noble degree for which Allah praises the Messengers is the description of *Ubudiyyah* (slavery, servitude, and devout worship) [They are all *Ibadullah* (the slaves of Allah).]

Allah the Most Exalted said about Nooh (عليه السلام):

Verily, he was a grateful slave. [Surah al-Israa' 17:3]

And He said about Muhammad (ﷺ):

Blessed be He Who sent down the Criterion (of right and wrong) to His slave (Muhammad) that he may be a Warner to the Worlds. [Surah al-Furqaan (25):1]

And He said about Ibraheem, Ishaaq and Ya'qoob:

And remember Our slaves, Ibraheem, Isaac and Jacob, all possessed strength and religious understanding. Verily, did We choose them by granting them the Remembrance of the home (in the Hereafter). And they are indeed in Our Sight of the Chosen and the Best. [Surah Saad 38:45-47]

And He said about ‘Eesaa,

He was not more than a slave. We granted Our favor to him and We made him an example to the Children of Israel. [Surah az-Zukhruf (43):59].

Faith and belief in the Messengers and Prophets comprises four aspects:

1. To believe that the message of these Messengers is in truth from Allah. Whoever disbelieves in any one of the Messengers, disbelieves in all of them, as Allah the Most Exalted said:

The people of Nooh rejected (disbelieved and belied) the Messengers. [Surah ash-Shu’araa’ (26):105]

Allah considered the people of Nooh disbelievers in all Messengers even though they apparently only disbelieved in the one Messenger that was sent to them. Therefore, and upon this principle, the Christians who disbelieve in Muhammad (ﷺ) and refuse to follow him are also disbelievers in ‘Eesaa (عليه السلام), the Son of Maryam, especially considering the fact that ‘Eesaa gave them the glad tidings of the coming of Muhammad. It makes no sense that he is their Messen-

ger, from whom they have received glad tidings of Muhammad's (ﷺ) coming to save them by Allah's grace from misguidance, and then they refuse to follow the guidance to the Straight Path.

2. To believe in those Messengers and Prophets whose names we know specifically, such as Muhammad, (Ibraheem), Musaa, 'Eesaa, Nooh, and to give them all the salutations of *salaah* and *salaam* [16]. The above mentioned five Messengers are called *Ulul-'Azm* (of strong determination and steadfastness), who are mentioned by Allah together in two places in the Qur'an: in Surah al-Ahzaab:

> **And (remember) when we took from the prophets their covenant, and from you (O Muhammad) and from Nooh, Ibraheem, Musaa and 'Eesaa, son of Mary. [Surah al-Ahzaab (33):7]**

and Surah ash-Shu'araa:

> **He (Allah) has ordained for you from the same religion (Islam) which He ordained for Nooh, and that which We have Inspired in you (O Muhammad) and that which We ordained for Ibraheem, Musaa and 'Eesaa, saying you should establish the religion and make no divisions in it. [Surah ash- Shu'araa (42):13]**

As for those whom we don't know by name, we are obligated to believe in them generally, as Allah the Most Exalted said:

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[16] To invoke Allah to praise them and keep them safe from all evil.

And indeed We have sent Messengers before you (O Muhammad): some of them We have related to you their story, and some We have not related their story to you. [Surah Ghaafir (40):78]

3. To believe in all the information that the Messengers have conveyed to us, which has come to us with a reliable, authentic and sound chain of narrators.

4. To perform the acts of obedience in accordance with the law (*Sharee'ah*) of the Messenger that Allah sent to us. He is the Last and Final Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ) who was sent to all mankind, as Allah the Most Exalted said:

But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith until they make you (O Muhammad) their judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept them with full submission. [Surah an-Nisaa' (4):65]

The great benefits of believing in the Messengers and Prophets include:

1. Knowledge of the great beneficence and mercy of Allah, since He has direct interest in the affairs of His creatures, and has therefore sent His Messengers to guide them to the Straight Path and inform them how to worship Him correctly. This is necessary since the minds of men cannot arrive to this beneficial knowledge independently.

2. Giving praise and thankfulness to Allah for this great blessing.

3. Love of the Messengers and Prophets, and respect and praise for them appropriate to their ranks and dignity since He, Most Exalted, chose and sent them on this noble mission and they worshipped Allah and conveyed the message to man with full sincerity and in the best of manners.

The obstinate, arrogant and rebellious people rejected the Messengers of Allah by the claim that such messengers should not be humans. Allah the Most Exalted refuted this claim saying:

> **And nothing prevented men from believing when the Guidance came to them, except that they said: "Has Allah sent a man as (His) Messenger?" Say: "If there were on the earth angels walking about, in peace and serenity, We should certainly have sent down for them from the heaven an angel as a Messenger." [Surah al-Israa' (17):94- 95]**

So Allah refutes this claim by arguing that since there are humans on earth, He sends humans as His Messengers. If the inhabitants of earth were angels, then He would have sent angels as Messengers so that they would be like them. Allah, the Most Exalted, tells us how the previous peoples rejected their messengers when He said:

> **[The disbelievers would say,] "You are just human beings, like us! You only want to turn us away from what our fathers used to worship. Bring us a clear authority." Their Messengers replied to them: "We are indeed just human beings like you, but Allah bestows His Grace to whom He Wills of His Slaves. It is not for us**

to come to you with an authority (proof) except by the permission of Allah."》 [Surah Ibraheem (14):10-11]

Belief in the Last Day and Resurrection[17]

The Last Day is that enormous event when everyone will be resurrected from death to the accounting and reckoning, to be asked about their deeds: to receive either reward for their good deeds, or punishment for their evil deeds. It is called "the Last Day" because it is the final day and the end of earthly time. This is the day when the people of Paradise will go to their appointed places in Paradise, and those of Hell to the Hellfire.

Belief in the Last Day and Resurrection comprises three aspects:

1. To believe in the resurrection after death. Resurrection will take place when the Trumpet will be blown [by Israafeel] for the second time [the first being for the death of all living creatures]. Humankind will awaken to face the Lord of the Worlds. They all will stand bare-footed, completely naked and uncircumcised before their Lord, as Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **As We began the first creation, so shall We repeat it, (it is) a promise binding upon Us. Truly We shall do it. [Surah al-Anbiyaa' (21):104].**

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[17] The Day of Resurrection is real and not ephemeral.

The Resurrection is an affirmed truth, proven by the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the unanimous agreement and consensus (*Ijmaa'*) of all the Muslims. Allah, the Exalted, said:

> **Then verily you will be dead after that. Then verily you will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment. [Surah al-Mu'minoon (23):15-16]**

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said in a hadeeth agreed upon by al-Bukhari and Muslim:

> **People will be gathered together on the Day of Judgment barefooted and uncircumcised.**

All the Muslims are in agreement affirmed the Resurrection. The Day of Resurrection and Accounting is necessitated by the wisdom of Allah to make a final time to judge everyone according to that which they are accountable. Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Did you think that We had created you in play (without any purpose), and that you would not be brought back to Us? [Surah al-Mu'minoon (23):115]**

And He, the Exalted, said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ):

> **Verily, He Who has given you the Qur'an (O Muhammad) will surely bring you back to the place of return. [Surah al-Qasas (28):85].**

2. To believe in the reckoning of the deeds and reward or punishment accordingly. This is proven through the Book of Allah, the Qur'an, the Sunnah and consensus of the Mus-

lims. The slaves of Allah will all be reckoned and recompensed for their deeds. Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Verily, to Us will be their return. Then verily, for Us will be their Reckoning. [Surah al-Ghaashiyah (88):25-26]**

And He said:

> **Whoever brings a good deed shall have ten times the like thereof to his credit, and whoever brings an evil deed shall have only the recompense of the like thereof, and they will not be wronged. [Surah al-An'aam (6):160]**

And He said:

> **And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there were the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it and Sufficient are We as Reckoners. [Surah al-Anbiyaa' (21):47]**

Abdullah ibn Umar (﵄) narrated that the Prophet(ﷺ) said:

> **Allah will bring the believer closer to Him, and will shield him from being exposed (for his evil deeds in front of everyone). He will say, "Do you remember such and such sin? Do you remember such and such sin?" He will say, "Yes, O my Lord!" When Allah gets this confession for his sins, and the believer thinks that his destruction is upon him, Allah will say, "I have preserved you from being exposed in front of others for these evil deeds during your lifetime and I am for-**

giving them for you today." So, he will be given his record of good deeds. As for the disbelievers and the hypocrites, they will be called openly in public: "These are the ones who lied against their Lord! Verily Allah's curse is upon the unjust ones!" (Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And in an authentic hadeeth the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

…if somebody intends to do a good deed and he does not do it, then Allah will write for him a full good deed. If he intends to do a good deed and he actually does it, then Allah will write with Him from ten to seven hundred times to many more times (reward). If somebody intends to do a bad deed and he does not do it, Allah will write a full good deed with Him. If somebody intends to do bad deed and actually did it, then Allah will write one bad deed (in his account). (Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

Muslims are unanimous in agreement that the Day of Reckoning and the Judgment will come, since both logic and wisdom point to it. According to the infinite Wisdom of Allah, all people must be judged a final decisive judgment. Allah revealed the Scriptures and sent the Messengers only that they should be accepted and followed. Moreover, Allah obligated the believers to fight against those who oppose the Scriptures and the Messengers, and He permitted that their blood be shed and their children, women and posses-

sions be seized] according to the strict laws of war]. If there were not a final Day of Reckoning, then all these matters would have been in vain! Allah the All-Wise is far removed from such an imperfection and contradiction.

Allah has indicated this line of argument in His saying:

> **Then surely We shall question those to whom the Book was sent, and verily, We shall question the Messengers. Then surely, We shall narrate unto them (their whole story) with knowledge, and indeed We were not absent. [Surah al-A'raaf (7):6-7]**

3. To believe in Paradise and Hellfire, and that they are the final and everlasting abode for the creatures (men and jinn).

Paradise is the final resting place of ultimate happiness and joy that Allah has prepared for the believers who feared Him, believed in Him, and sincerely obeyed Him and His Messenger who brought the message. Paradise is described as a place of unimaginable bounties and pleasures which "no eye has ever seen, nor an ear ever heard of, nor a mind has ever imagined."

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Verily, those who believe and do righteous deeds, they are the best of creatures. Their reward with their Lord is Gardens of Eternity, underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever; Allah is Well-Pleased with them, and they with Him. That is for him who fears his Lord. [Surah al-Bayyinah (98):7-8]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do. [Surah as-Sajdah (32):17]

Hellfire is the final destination of torment and punishment that Allah has prepared for the disbelievers, the unjust (criminals), those who disbelieved in Allah and disobeyed the Messengers.

Hellfire contains all kinds of unimaginable punishments and torments. Allah the Most Exalted said:

And fear the Fire which is prepared for the disbelievers. [Surah Aali 'Imraan (3):131]

And He said:

We have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them. If they ask for help they will be granted water like boiling oil that will scald their faces. Terrible is the drink, and what an evil dwelling! [Surah al-Kahf (18):29]

And He said:

Verily Allah has cursed the disbelievers and prepared for them a flaming Fire wherein they will abide forever; and they will find neither a protector nor a helper. On the Day when their faces will be turned and rolled from all sides in the Fire, they will say: "Oh, would that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger (Muhammad)." [Surah al-Ahzaab (33):64-66]

All that happens after death is included in the belief of the Last Day, for example:

a) The trial of the grave, wherein all will be asked: Who was your Lord? What was your religion? Who was your prophet?

So, as is explained in the Qur'an and Sunnah, Allah will make those who believed resolute, with the word that stands firm. Thus the believer will say: **"My Lord is Allah, my religion is Islam and my Prophet is Muhammed."** But the transgressors will err and go astray. The disbeliever will say: **"Haah, haah, I don't know."** The hypocrite or the person in doubt[18] will say: **"I'm not sure, I heard the people say something, so I just repeated what they said."**[19]

b) The grave will be a place of either extreme pain and torment or extreme pleasure and happiness.

The pain and torment will be upon the transgressors, disbelievers and hypocrites, as Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And if you but see when the wrongdoers are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching forth their hands (saying): "Deliver your souls; this day you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation**

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[18] Either both hypocrites and people in doubt will say that or the narrator was uncertain which was mentioned, as is stated in the *Saheeh*s of al-Bukhari and Muslim.

[19] Al-Albani graded it as authentic in *Saheeh-ul-Jaami'*.

because of what you used to utter against Allah untruthfully. And you used to reject his signs with disrespect." [Surah al-An'aam (6):93]

And Allah the Most Exalted said concerning Pharaoh and his followers:

The Fire – they will be exposed to it morning and afternoon, and on the Day when the Hour will be established (it will be said to the angels): "Make Pharaoh's people to enter the severest Torment." [Surah Ghaafir (40):46]

Imam Muslim reports that Zaid ibn Thabit (ﷺ) narrated:

The Prophet said to his Companions, "I would have asked Allah to let you hear what I am hearing of the (peoples') punishment in the grave, but (I refrain) for the fear that you would not bury each other after that." Then the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, turned his face towards them saying: "Seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the Fire!" They said: "We seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the Fire." He said: "Seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the grave!" They said: "We seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the grave." He said: "Seek refuge in Allah from all calamities, whether apparent or hidden!" They said, "We seek refuge in Allah from all calamities, whether apparent or hidden." He said: "Seek refuge in Allah from the calamity of one-eyed Antichrist (False Messiah)!" They said, "We seek refuge in

Allah from the calamity of one-eyed Antichrist (False Messiah).”

The extreme pleasure and happiness of the grave will be for the faithful and truthful believers. Allah the Most Exalted said:

Verily those who say, “Our Lord is Allah,” and then stood fast on these words, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death, saying), “Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised.”﴿ [Surah Fussilat (41):30]

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

Then why do you not (intervene) when (the soul of a dying person) reaches the throat (gurgling)? And you are, at the moment, looking on (hopelessly)? But We (our angels who take the soul) are nearer to him than you are, but you do not see. Then why do you not, if you are exempt from the reckoning and recompense, bring back the soul (to its body) if you are truthful? Then, if he (the dying person) be of those near ones (close to Allah), there is for him rest and provisions, and a Garden of Delights (Paradise). [Surah al-Waqi’ah (56):83-89]

It is reported on the authority of al-Baraa ibn ‘Aazib that the Prophet (ﷺ) said about the believer, after he is responds to the questioning by the angels:

A caller from heaven will say, “My slave has said the truth. Therefore, furnish him (in his grave) from (the

pleasures of) Paradise, and dress him from (the clothes of) Paradise, and open a door for him to Paradise." Then he said, "He will receive from its tranquility and beautiful smell. And his grave will be enlarged for him as far a distance as his sight reaches."

This is reported by Imam Ahmad and Abu Dawood in a long hadeeth, [of which only a portion has been mentioned].

The great benefits of believing in the Last Day and Resurrection include:

1. Encouraging the desire to do the deeds of obedience hoping for the bliss and reward of Paradise.

2. Being terrified of committing deeds of disobedience fearing the punishment of the Hellfire.

3. Comforting the believer about the pleasures and luxuries that he misses in this worldly life and the hardships and pains he endures in the hope for the bliss and reward of the Paradise.

[Some] disbelievers do not believe that life after death is possible. The falseness of their doubt about the possibility of life after death can be established by: *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture), *al-Hiss* (physical senses), and *al-'Aql* (reason and analysis).

Proving the possibility of life after death by *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture), Allah the Most Exalted said:

The disbelievers pretend that they will never be resurrected (for the account). Say (O Muhammad): "Yes! By my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected, then you will be informed (and recompensed for) what you did, and that is easy for Allah." [Surah at-Taghaabun (64):7]

All Scriptures [like the Torah, Psalms and Gospels] are unanimous on this matter (of belief in the Hereafter).

Proving the possibility of life after death by *al-Hiss* (physical senses):

To illustrate to us this possibility, Allah has given us stories of past events when people saw with their own eyes (and physical senses) how He raised the dead to life. There are five examples given in the second chapter of the Qur'an, in Surah al-Baqarah:

1. The story of the people of Musaa when they said to him, **"We will not believe in you unless we see Allah openly without a barrier"**, and thus they were seized by death. Thereafter Allah resurrected them and said to admonish them and all the Children of Israel with this story,

And (remember) when you said, "O Musaa! We shall never believe in you till we see Allah plainly." But you were seized with a thunderbolt (and lightening) while you were looking. Then We raised you up after your death so that you might be grateful. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):55-56]

2. The story of the murdered man among the Children of Israel, when they argued about determining who the murderer was. Allah ordered them to sacrifice a cow and strike the corpse with a part of it so that he can come to life to tell them about the killer. Allah the Most Exalted said about this case:

> **And (remember) when you killed a man and fell into dispute among yourselves as to the crime. So Allah brought forth that which you were hiding. So We said, "Strike him (the dead man) with a piece of it (the cow)." Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His signs so that you may understand. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):72-73]**

3. The story of the group that ran away from their homes fearing death even though they were thousands and could have stood up to their enemies. Allah struck them dead in their tracks and then brought them back to life. Relating this story Allah Most Exalted said in the Qur'an:

> **Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in thousands, fearing death? Allah said to them: "Die!" And then He restored them to life. Truly, Allah is full of Bounty to mankind, but most men thank not. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):243].**

4. The story of the man who passed by a dead and deserted village, and wondered how Allah would be able to resurrect them. Allah struck him dead for a hundred years and then raised him up again. Relating this story, Allah Most Exalted said:

Or like the one who passed by a town all in utter ruins. He said, "Oh! How will Allah ever bring it to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up. He said, "How long did you remain (dead)?" He [the man] replied, "Perhaps I remained (dead) a day or a part of a day." He said, "Nay, you have remained for a hundred years; look at your food and your drink, they show no change; and look at your donkey! And thus We have made of you a Sign for the people. And look at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh." When this was clearly shown to him, he said, "I Know (now) that Allah is Able to do all things." [Surah al-Baqarah (2):259]

5. The story of Ibraheem (عليه السلام) who asked Allah to show him how He resurrects the dead. Allah ordered him to slaughter four birds, cut them in pieces and spread these pieces to various mountains. Then He told him to call these dead birds, and when he did, they came back to him flying. On this Allah the Most Exalted said:

And (remember) when Ibraheem said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." Allah said, "Do you not believe?" Ibraheem said, "Yes, but to be stronger in faith." He said, "Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you (to slaughter them and cut them into pieces), and then put a portion of them on every hill and call them, they will come to you in haste. And know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise." [Surah al-Baqarah (2):260]

These five historically authentic examples, which were physically experienced, prove that the dead can rise back to life by the Will of Allah. The fact that 'Eesaa raised the dead from their graves by the Will of Allah has already been mentioned above.

Proving the possibility of life after death *al-Aql* (reason and analysis):

Two rational arguments can be presented here:

The first argument is that Allah is the Original Creator of all the creation, and thus, He who is capable of the first creation is also capable of re-creation, which is even simpler. Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **And it is He, Who originates the creation, then He will repeat it (after it has been perished), and this is easier for Him. [Surah ar-Room (30):27]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **As We brought (into existence) the first creation, We shall repeat it, (it is) a promise binding upon Us. Truly, We shall do it. [Surah al-Anbiyaa' (21):104]**

And Allah the Most Exalted said to those who deny that Allah can restore decayed bones:

> **Say (O Muhammad), "He will give life to them Who created them for the first time! And He is the All-Knower of every creation." [Surah Yaa-Seen (36):79]**

The second argument is that we observe the earth lifeless and barren from lack of rain. Allah sends the rains and then

we observe the soil coming back to life and various kinds of plants spring forth green and flourish. So the One Who brings life back to the dead earth and makes the plants flourish is able also to raise the dead animals back to life. Allah, the Most Exalted, said:

And among His Signs you see the earth barren, but when We send down water (rain) to it, it is stirred to life and growth (of vegetation). Verily, He Who gives it life, surely is able to give life to the dead. Indeed! He is able to do all things. [Surah Fussilat (41):39]

And He said:

And We send down blessed water (rain) from the sky then We produce therewith gardens and grains of all harvests that are reaped; and tall date palms, with ranged clusters; provisions for (Allah's) slaves. And We give life therewith to dead land. Thus will be the Resurrection (of the dead). [Surah Qaaf (50):9-11]

Some misguided people say that the punishment or bliss in the grave is not possible since it is against the reality we see when we open the graves and find the decomposed corpses. They say that we do not find that the grave has expanded its size or grown narrow, as some hadeeth mention.

This claim of theirs is invalid by proofs of *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture), *al-Hiss* (physical senses), and *al-Aql* (reason and analysis).

Proving the possibility of punishment or bliss in the grave by *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture):

Some of the proofs have been mentioned above. One other proof that is reported by al-Bukhari is the narration of Abdullah ibn Abbaas (ﷺ) when he said,

> **The Prophet passed by some walls in Madeenah and heard the screams of two persons who were being punished in their graves. He mentioned the reasons behind this punishment saying, "One of them did not protect himself (spoiling his clothes) from urine. The other one used to spread gossip."**

Proving the possibility of punishment or bliss in the grave by *al-Hiss* (physical senses):

Sometimes we sense ourselves in our dreams that we are in a huge expanse, or extremely constricted and confined, feeling the pain of being squeezed and the fear of claustrophobia. Sometimes we are even jerked awake from these nightmares, only to find ourselves sitting in our beds. Sleep is the twin of death, and this is why Allah calls it a type of "*Wafaat*" (fulfillment, appointed time of death and its like), as Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep. He keeps those (souls) for which He had ordained death and sends the others (back) for a term appointed. Verily, in this are signs for a people who think deeply. [Surah az-Zumar (39):42]**

Proving the possibility of punishment or bliss in the grave by "al-'Aql" (reason and analysis):

Sometimes a person sees a dream that becomes true and conforms to exact events and traits of the real world. For example, one might see the Prophet (ﷺ) in their dreams. Whoever sees the Prophet in the shape that he is described in the books of hadeeth, we know, has truly seen him, even though the sleeper is simply in his room on his bed far away from what he is seeing. If this is the case in matters of the physical world, wouldn't it be possible in matters of the Hereafter?

As for the doubts of the disbelievers concerning that they do not see the punishment of the corpses or that the graves expand in size or grow narrow as some hadeeth mention, this is answered by the following points:

The first point is that one is not allowed to refute religious matters and *Sharee'ah* (law) with mere doubts and suspicions of this nature without any solid argument against, since it may be that the deficiency is only in understanding, as the Arab poet said:

Many are those who claim a sound saying is defective,

Whereas nothing is defective but their own understanding.

The second point is that these issues of the grave are of the realm of the unseen, a realm not sensed by physical senses. If matters of the unseen could be tested and affirmed by physical senses, there would not be any benefit of believing in and having belief in the revelations about the unseen realm because this would equalize the believer and disbeliever.

The third point is that only the dead person himself experiences punishment or bliss of the grave, and its expansiveness or constriction. The case is similar with the sleeping person, since only the dreamer feels the sensations of his dreams, whether nightmares of contractions or expanses of lightheartedness, while for others he is asleep in his bed in his room. Similarly, the Prophet (ﷺ) would receive revelation and the companions next to him would not hear the revelation while he did. Sometimes the angel would come to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the shape of a man but the companions were not able to see or hear the angel.

The fourth point is that we creatures have a limited sensual capacity. Much physical reality is outside our range of perception. Everything in the universe, the seven heavens, the earth and all that is therein, praise and glorify Allah, but we cannot hear their forms of praise and glorification and only sometimes does Allah give the power to some of His creatures to hear them, as He the Most Exalted said:

> **The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him, and there is not a thing but that glorifies His praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Truly, He is Ever Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving. [Surah al-Israa' (17):44].**

Similarly, the Jinn[20] go back and forth and travel about on the earth, but we cannot see them. The Jinn came to the

[20] Creatures made of fire; the ungrateful disbelieving ones are also known as devils.

Messenger (ﷺ) and listened to his recitation of the Qur'an. After he finished the recitation they went back to their nation of Jinn to convey the Message to them [as verses of the Qur'an relate]. All of this is outside the range of our sense perception. Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **O Children of Adam! Let not Satan deceive you as he got your parents (Adam and Eve) out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiment, to show them their private parts. Verily, he and his soldiers see you from where you will not see them. Verily, We made the devils protectors and helpers of those who believe not. [Surah al-A'raaf (7):27].**

If we, the creatures, do not know what exists beyond our range of perception and comprehension, we cannot deny its existence. Therefore, it is not allowed for us to dispute what has been proven to exist of the unseen realm by revealed scriptures[21].

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[21] Some misguided people claim that the life of the hereafter is only spiritual and not physical. They claim that the physical punishments and rewards in actuality symbolize mental states of agony or ecstasy, respectively. Holding this belief is incorrect and leads a person out of the fold of the religion, as that is denying what is mentioned clearly in the Qur'an. A Muslim is not to misconstrue the meanings of anything in the Qur'an, and if anything is not within his realm of understanding, his attitude should be, "We hear and we obey."

Belief in Qadar

The Arabic word "*Qadar*" means the Divine Measure[22] with which Allah has ordained and decreed with exact calculations for everything in creation, according to His Eternal Omniscience and His Sublime Wisdom that encompasses eternity.

Faith and belief in Qadar comprises four aspects:

1. The belief that Allah has knowledge of everything in the universe with all the minute details of its occurrences in time and space. This perfect and complete knowledge encompasses all of Allah's own acts and all actions of the creatures.

2. Everything that is preordained is written on "*al-Lawh-al-Mahfoodh*" (The Preserved Tablet), which is with Allah. Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Do you not know that Allah knows all that is in heaven and on earth? Verily, it is all in the Book. Verily, that is easy for Allah. [Surah al-Hajj (22):70]**

In *Saheeh Muslim*, we find the report of Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (ﷺ) who narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say:

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[22] Also translated as Predestination and Fate.

Allah recorded the measurement of all matters pertaining to creation fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and earth.

3. The belief that nothing can exist or happen except by the Will and Permission of Allah, and this includes what pertains to His Actions as well as to the actions of all that He created. Allah the Most Exalted said concerning His own actions:

And your Lord Creates whatsoever He wills and chooses. [Surah al-Qasas (28):68]

And He said:

And Allah does what He wills. [Surah Ibraaheem (14): 27]

And He said:

It is He Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. [Surah Aali 'Imraan (3):6]

Concerning the actions of the creatures Allah the Most Exalted said:

Had Allah willed, indeed He would have given them power over you, and they would have fought you. [Surah an-Nisaa' (4):90]

And He said:

And if Allah had willed, they would not have done so. So leave them alone with their fabrications. [Surah al-An'aam (6):137]

4. The belief that Allah created all the creation and creatures and all their actions, characteristics and movements.[23] Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian over all things. [Surah az-Zumar (39):62]**

And He said:

> **He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements. [Surah al-Furqaan (25):2]**

And Allah told us that Ibraheem said to his people [about them carving their idols]:

> **And Allah has created you and your making. [Surah as-Saaffaat (37):96]**

Qadar, as explained above, is not contradictory to the reality that humans have the freedom to act as they will and choose, and are capable of doing so, since this is proven by both *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture) and by *al-Waqi'* (the reality that we observe around us).

As for the proof of the religious scriptures on this, we can cite the words of Allah when He the Most Exalted said:

> **So whosoever wills, let him take a return to his Lord.﴿[Surah an-Naba' (78):39]**

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[23] Actions are result of intention and ability, and since these are both creations, the actions are also creations of Allah. Everything besides Allah and his Attributes and actions are creations of Allah.

And He said:

So go to your tithe when and how you will. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):223]

And concerning the proof of one having his own ability, He said:

So keep your duty to Allah as much as you can; listen and obey. [Surah at-Taghaabun (64):16]

And He said:

Allah does not burden a person beyond his scope. He receives reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):286]

As for the proof of reality we observe around us, everybody knows that a person has his own will and ability by which he acts and moves. He can positively differentiate between what happens by his own will, like walking and talking, and what happens to him involuntarily without his will, like shuddering with a sneeze or fever etc. But all that happens - action by man's will and ability, or without it, - only happens by the Supreme Will of Allah, the Most Exalted. Allah the Most Exalted said:

For whosoever among you wills, shall walk straight. And you will not want to walk straight unless it is what Allah wills, the Lord of the worlds. [Surah at-Takweer (81):28-29]

Allah owns the entire universe and nothing happens in His Kingdom and Sovereignty without His Knowledge and Will.

Nevertheless, the reality of Qadar, as explained above, should not encourage one to think that he can use the excuse of Qadar to commit sins by leaving his obligations, i.e., that he is absolved of his responsibilities by blaming it on Qadar. Any attempt to argue along these lines is false and invalid for the following reasons:

1. The saying of Allah:

> **Those who took partners in worship with Allah will say, "If Allah had willed, we would not have taken partners in worship with Him, nor would our fathers have, and we would not have forbidden anything (against His Will)." Those that went before likewise belied till they tasted of Our Wrath. Say, "Have you any knowledge that you can produce before us? Verily, you follow nothing but guesses and you say nothing but a lie." [Surah al-An'aam (6):148]**

These disbelievers did not have any valid excuse when they claimed that whatever they did was according to Qadar. If this excuse was acceptable and true, then why would Allah punish them for their sins?

2. The saying of Allah:

> **Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning (came) in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers (have been sent for**

their guidance). And Allah is forever All-Powerful, All-Wise. [Surah an-Nisaa' (4):165]

If there were a legitimate excuse for these disbelievers by arguing with Qadar, Allah wouldn't have negated that excuse by the fact that He sent His Messengers according to His Qadar. Thus, the disbelievers cannot use Qadar as an excuse for their disbelieving because their disobedience after receiving the message is also by Allah's Qadar, i.e. they could have avoided Allah's punishment by following His Messengers and yet they chose the path of disobedience by their will.[24]

3. Al-Bukhari and Muslim report, and this version is al-Bukhari's, that Ali ibn Abi Talib (ﷺ) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

One's final destination in Hell or Paradise is already determined for each one of you.

A man said:

Should we depend (on this fact), O Messenger of Allah?

He said,

[24] They could have obeyed and then said, "That was the Qadar of Allah that we obeyed." Rather, they chose to disobey and blamed it on Qadar instead.

No! Perform deeds, because everyone will be helped (to do as he will and reach his destiny). Then he read the verse of the Qur'an:

> **As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him, and believes in Goodness, We will make smooth for him the path of ease. But he who withholds and thinks himself self-sufficient, denies Goodness, We will make smooth for him the path of evil. [Surah al-Lail (92):5-10]**

And in the version of Muslim, the Prophet (ﷺ) said in completion:

Everyone is helped to that for which he was created.

Thus we see that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) commanded us to continue striving to do the good deeds and forbade us to depend upon (misconceptions about) Qadar.

4. Allah commanded mankind to obey Him by observing the laws and regulations. He did not order them to do anything beyond their capacity. Allah the Most Exalted said:

So keep your duty to Allah (and fear Him) as much as you can. [Surah at-Taghaabun (64):16]

And He said:

Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):286]

If man was compelled and forced to do something, this would mean that he is required to do what is beyond his capacity. This is a false mistaken belief [which cannot be as-

cribed to Allah, since He commands man and has made him responsible only for what is within his power and by his own free will]. Upon this principle, Allah forgives those sins that take place because of the legitimate excuse of ignorance, forgetfulness or compulsion.

5. Qadar is the exclusive secret preserved with Allah. Man's willful action only takes place by his own volition and will. Thus, what he does is built on his own will to act, and not upon previous knowledge about Allah's Qadar. It follows by necessity that seeking to excuse oneself by the pretext of Qadar is not a valid excuse because he had no knowledge of that Qadar. Man cannot use as an argument that which is outside his scope of knowledge.

6. We see that man is very anxious to benefit himself with what pleases him and makes him feel good, and to avoid what causes pains. We do not find anybody leaving these worldly benefits and pleasures to what causes pain with the excuse that Qadar made him do it, so why does he leave the religious commandments of Allah which bring him benefit and pleasures and go to what causes harm using this feeble excuse of Qadar? Are not the two situations analogous and similar?

An example will illustrate this point here. If somebody had two roads in front of him to choose from, one leading to a place of chaos, murder, killing, looting, rape, insecurity and hunger, and the other leading to a place of proper order, excellent security, luxurious standard of living, and respect for one's own self, family and property: which road would

he choose? No sane person would take the road to the first place arguing that Qadar made him do it. Why does someone choose in these matters of the Hereafter what leads him to Hellfire rather than Paradise, claiming that Qadar made him do it, when he would never make the same argument in mundane affairs?

Another example is that the sick and diseased take medicine when they are ordered to, even though they dislike the taste. They leave foods that harm them seeking to cure themselves and get better. It will not happen that these sick people refuse their medicines and take the harmful foods arguing that Qadar made them do it, so why would one abandon obeying Allah and His Messenger, and instead disobey Allah and His Messenger, claiming that Qadar made him do it? [Certainly this is the most foolish of Satan's tricks and the feeblest of excuses.]

7. Suppose the person who takes Qadar as a pretext to justify leaving responsibilities and committing sins is attacked by someone who takes his property, violates his honor or commits some other similar crime, and then the attacker says to him, "Hey! Don't blame me! My attack on you was only because of Allah's Qadar." The victim would never accept this excuse from the criminal. How can it be that he won't accept Qadar as an excuse to justify somebody else's attack on him while he takes it as an excuse for his own attack against the rights of Allah? [How amazing are his double standards!]

It has been reported that a man who had been caught stealing was brought to Umar ibn al-Khattab (ﷺ). Umar ordered that his hand be cut off. The man said: **"Wait, O leader of the believers. I only stole because this was by the Qadar of Allah."** Umar said, **"And we are cutting your hand off by the Qadar of Allah."**

The great benefits of believing in the Qadar of Allah include the following:

1. To trust in Allah in accomplishing your actions. When someone performs actions according to their causes and effects, he doesn't depend on the causes and effects only, since he knows that, ultimately, nothings happens except by the Will of Allah.

2. To protect oneself from becoming arrogant and haughty when he accomplishes his goals because he knows that his accomplishment was only by the Blessings of Allah, Who made it possible for him to achieve his goals. Self-aggrandizement is a kind of ingratitude that makes one forget the obligation of thanking Allah.

3. To receive from Allah a sense of satisfaction, tranquility and security, since he realizes that nothing happens except by the Qadar of Allah. He does not become anxious about losing things that please him or receiving things that displease him, because he knows that he will only get what the Owner and Master-Sovereign of the heavens and earth has written for him. Allah the Most Exalted said:

No calamity befalls on the earth or upon yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book of Decrees before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah. In order that you may not be sad over matters that you fail to get, nor rejoice because of that which has been given to you. And Allah likes not prideful boasters. [Surah al-Hadeed (57):22-23]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

How amazing is the matter of the believer! There is good in every affair of his, and this is not the case with anyone else. If any joy befalls him, he gives thanks (to Allah), thus there is good for him in it. If a calamity befalls him, he endures it patiently, and thus there is a good for him in it. (Reported by Muslim)

Two groups have fallen into misguidance with regard to belief in the Qadar of Allah:

The first group is the *Jabriyyah* who say that man is compelled to do whatever he does and that he has no power of his own or free will to act.

The second group is the *Qadariyyah* who say that man's actions are independent in will and power from Allah's Will and Power, and that Allah's Will and Power has no influence on his actions.

The first group's claim is refuted by both *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture) and by *al-Waqi'* (the reality that we observe around us).

Proving the invalidity of the *Jabriyyah* claim by *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture):

Allah the Most Exalted had affirmed that we humans have a will and power of our own. Allah has given us these qualities in the possessive form.

Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter. [Surah Aali 'Imraan (3):152]**

And He said:

> **And say: "The Truth is from your Lord." Then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily We have prepared for the unjust a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them. [Surah al-Kahf (18):29]**

And He said:

> **Whosoever does righteous deeds, it is for (the benefit of) his own self, and whosoever does evil deeds, it is against his own self, and your Lord is not at all unjust to (His) slaves. [Surah Fussilat (41):46]**

Proving the invalidity of the *Jabriyyah* claim by *al-Waqi'* (the reality that we observe around us):

Everybody knows instinctively the difference between his willful actions, like when he eats, drinks, sells and buys, and between those acts that fall outside his willpower, like shuddering involuntarily and falling off a roof accidentally. The first kind of action is definitely his because he chooses

them on his own will and power, whereas the second kind is beyond his choice and power.

The *Qadariyyah's* claim is refuted by *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture) and by *al-Aql* (reason and analysis).

Proving the invalidity of the *Qadariyyah* claim by *ash-Sharee'ah* (revelation and scripture)

Allah the Most Exalted created everything by His Will and He has made it perfectly clear that all of man's actions happen only by His Will. Allah the Most Exalted has said:

> **If Allah had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought against each other, after clear Verses of Allah had come to them, but they differed, some of them believed and others disbelieved. If Allah had willed, they would not have fought against one another, but Allah does what He likes. [Surah al-Baqarah (2):253]**

And He said:

> **And if We had willed, surely, We would have given every person his guidance, but the Word from Me took effect (about evildoers), that I will fill Hell with Jinn and mankind together. [Surah as-Sajdah (32):13]**

Proving the invalidity of the *Qadariyyah* claim by *al-'Aql* (reason and analysis)

The entire universe belongs to Allah. It is His domain. Man is part of this universe and belongs to Allah as His slave and servant. It is not the right of the slave and servant to

dispose of the property of the Master and Owner except by His Permission and Will.

Objectives of Islamic Belief and Creed

The Arabic word *Hadaf* (Objective) has several meanings: an object which one takes aim at and shoots at; an object of want and desire.

The objectives of Islamic creed can be defined as those noble purposes which one aims to achieve by believing in and adhering to it. They are many, and some of them are as follows:

The first objective: sincerity and purity of intention. Allah is the Creator Who has no partner, and the intention and worship must be only to Him alone.

The second objective: liberation of the mind and intellect from false notions, foolishness and irrationality. Whoever is devoid of this true belief and creed becomes depraved intellectually and spiritually, becomes a worshipper of material things and physical desires or stumbles along with various misguided, deviant and foolish doctrines and ideologies.

The third objective: tranquility and peace of heart and mind. Belief dissolves despair, loss of heart and anxiety, because by belief one is attached to his Lord, Creator and Cherisher. He accepts His Lord and Sustainer as his Lawmaker, Legislator, Ruler and Judge and becomes satisfied with Allah's wise Qadar. His heart opens wide for the religion of Islam and doesn't desire any substitute.

The fourth objective: A clear consciousness, purity and sincerity in intention and actions in the worship of Allah, the one true God, and also in all dealings and relationships with people. The fundamental principle of Islam is following the Messengers in purity and sincerity, and in intention and action.

The fifth objective: seriousness and determination in all affairs. A faithful believer does not miss an opportunity to do a good deed hoping for its reward, and to avoid the temptation towards evil deeds fearing its punishment, because from among the fundamental principles of Islam is belief in the Resurrection and the Reckoning for good and evil deeds. Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **For all there will be degrees (or ranks) according to what they did. And your Lord is not unaware of what they do. [Surah al-An'aam (6):132]**

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) encouraged us with this objective saying:

> **A strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than a weak believer, and there is good in every believer. Be keen to get that which gives you benefit and seek help from Allah and do not lose heart. And if anything befalls you do not say: "If I had not done this or that, such and such would not have happened to me," but say, "Allah has ordained and He does as He wills," because "if" is an opening for Satan's actions. (Reported by Muslim)**

The sixth objective: establishment of a strong nation and community of believing Muslims who give generously all that they have for the sake of Allah to protect and reinforce its foundations. These kinds of believers are not concerned about the problems they face in Allah's cause, as Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Verily the believers are only those who have believed in Allah and His Messengers, and do not afterward doubt, who strive with their lives in the Cause of Allah. Those are indeed the truthful ones. [Surah al-Hujuraat (49):15]**

The seventh objective: ultimate happiness and felicity in this life and the Hereafter, by reformation and cultivating good actions in individuals and groups, in order to achieve the highest and most noble of rewards. In this context Allah the Most Exalted said:

> **Whoever works righteously, whether male of female, while he or she is a true believer, verily, We will give them good life (in this world), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (in Hereafter). [Surah an-Nahl (16):97]**

These are some of the noble objectives that we hope to achieve and wish for all the Muslims.

شرح أصول الإيمان

(باللغة الإنجليزية)

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